

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (canceled)
2. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 34, wherein said region comprises at least two combined reception and connection regions each for receiving a corresponding modular treatment station.
3. (canceled)
4. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in ~~Claim 3~~ Claim 2, wherein ~~said modular treatment station further comprises~~ comprising a disposal system, wherein said modular treatment station connects to said disposal system.
5. (canceled)
6. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 4, wherein said combined reception and connection regions comprise a bar for guiding reception and insertion of said modular treatment station, and a docking point for connection of ~~said supply system and said disposal system to said modular treatment station.~~
7. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in ~~Claim 5~~ Claim 6, wherein said modular treatment station has ~~plug-like~~ connector stems and electrical contacts that correspond to corresponding openings and contacts of said docking point.
8. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein a connection that is electrically conductive is created between said modular treatment station and said apparatus when said modular treatment station is in a docked state.
9. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein a connection that is thermally conductive is created between said modular treatment station and said apparatus when said modular treatment station is in a docked state.
10. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 7, wherein a connection that carries a flow medium is created between said modular treatment station and said apparatus when said modular treatment station is in a docked state.
11. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 34, wherein said region for receiving said modular treatment station is configured alongside said multiple array of processing stations.
12. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 34, wherein said region for receiving said modular treatment station is configured at least slightly below said multiple array of processing stations.

13. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 34, wherein an access opening is provided in said housing for insertion and removal of said modular treatment station.
14. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 13, further comprising a cover for closing said access opening.
15. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 13, wherein said housing includes a back wall and said access opening is provided through said back wall.
16. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 15, wherein said access opening is provided through a lateral portion of said back wall.
17. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 34, wherein said modular treatment station comprises a container for receiving liquid used for treatment of said specimens.
18. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 17, wherein said modular treatment station comprises a heating station.
19. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 17, wherein said modular treatment station comprises a rinsing device.
20. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 17, wherein said modular treatment station comprises a turbulence-inducing device for said liquid used for treatment.
21. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 17, wherein said modular treatment station comprises a fan.
22. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 17, wherein said modular treatment station comprises an extraction system for extracting vapors.
23. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 22, wherein said extraction system includes an extraction chamber.
24. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 23, wherein said apparatus has a central extraction system for extracting vapors, and said extraction chamber of said modular treatment station is in flow communication with said central extraction system.
25. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 17, wherein said modular treatment station comprises a control system for various functional units.
26. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 25, wherein said control system is a closed-loop control system.

27. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 17, wherein said chamber also receives said object carriers.
28. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 27, wherein said chamber includes holding means to receive and secure said object carriers.
29. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 34, wherein said transport device serves to deliver said specimens, or said object carriers carrying said specimens, into said modular treatment stations.
30. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 29, wherein said transport device is embodied as a robot arm.
31. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 30, wherein said robot arm has two partial arms.
32. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 30, wherein said robot arm is rotatable about a vertical shaft.
33. (currently amended) The improvement apparatus as defined in Claim 30, wherein said robot arm is adjustable in height.
34. (new) An apparatus for treating cytological or histological specimens comprising:
 - a housing;
 - an array of processing stations within said housing;
 - a transport device for delivering the specimens, or object carriers carrying the specimens, into and out of said processing stations;
 - a region within said housing proximate to said array of processing stations, said region being reachable by said transport device; and
 - a modular treatment station received in said region, said modular treatment station being removable from said housing and having at least one permanently defined function, other than containment of fluid, associated therewith.